

ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

BIRD STUDIES AT OLD CAPE MAY. AN ORNITHOLOGY OF COASTAL NEW JERSEY. By Witmer Stone. Two volumes, Royal Octavo. Pp. i-xiv + 1-941. Pls. 1-120, and 270 text figures. Pub. by the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club, Philadelphia (19th St. and the Parkway). 1937. Price, \$6.50 postpaid.

A very adequate review of this work comes in a letter from the author himself, who refers to these handsome volumes as a "‘field study’ covering my experiences in ‘days off’ since 1890 and those of my fellow members. The ‘studies’ of behavior and life history are mainly from observations at Cape May but the records cover the whole New Jersey coast. I have tried to picture the environment of the various species and to get the atmosphere and the spirit of the Cape as I know it. (But have not been led into *verse*!!)"

Here we give the reader the story and the background, even including a facetious reference to current BULLETIN editorial. Dr. Stone tells us that "It has been a great pleasure to personally plan and manage the production of such a work and to see it take form just as I had planned."

Probably during the greater part of the half century (forty-eight years) of his studies in this region he was playing with visions of such a work. Can one visualize all this in terms of human life! It becomes the more interesting when we recall the short period of time which Alexander Wilson had for the execution of his ornithological work. What can be more inspiring to the scientific tyro than such a life-long devotion to a purpose, and what can be more satisfying than its final materialization! Dr. Thos. S. Roberts with his "Birds of Minnesota" gives us a very similar picture in the field of contemporaneous ornithology. Both men are Nestors in present-day North American ornithology.

The first seventy pages are devoted to an "introduction", which describes the geography and ecology of the region, the changes in bird life which the author has noted, the migration phenomena, and the monthly calendar. The remaining pages of the two volumes are devoted to the author's annotations of the species treated. The two volumes are bountifully illustrated, there being three colored plates, more than a hundred plates of halftone photographs, and innumerable line sketches. And all of these illustrations have been contributed by Dr. Stone's colleagues in the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club. Thus we record another stately addition to the literature of American ornithology.—T. C. S.

THE BIRDS OF AMERICA. By John James Audubon. With an Introduction and Descriptive Text by William Vogt. The Macmillan Co., New York. 1937. 500 col. pls. Price, \$12.50.

Some years ago one of the large Chicago newspapers reproduced in color for its Sunday edition a great many of the Audubon plates. Many people attempted to preserve a complete set of these newspaper reproductions—a futile effort, probably, for most of those who attempted it. Now the complete set of bird portraits has been issued in book form by one of the large publishing houses of the country. There can be no doubt of the beauty of these plates, nor of the privilege of possessing them in one cover. Yet, beautiful as they are, they only enhance the esteem for the work of our modern bird artists. It ought to be possible to award a full measure of praise and credit to this great pioneer artist without indulging in futile hero worship.